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DECAL & Georgia's Pre-K Program launch Online Learning Initiative

*New Resource Offers Free Professional Development and Information
For Early Learning Community*

ATLANTA, Ga., (November 29, 2012) – Bobby Cagle, commissioner of Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL), today announced the launch of the Online Library Learning Initiative (OLLI), a virtual warehouse of online learning modules and video podcasts designed specifically for the Early Learning Community teaching children from birth to age five.

“With OLLI, we’ve created a collection of short courses and video podcasts designed to enhance the quality of education for Georgia’s youngest students and keep them healthy and safe, by improving the standards of practice for early learning,” Cagle explained. “In difficult economic times, early childhood educators can’t always get to the latest seminar and budgets for new curriculum and materials are stretched more than ever. This resource allows everyone with Internet access to share in the latest materials both for classroom use and professional development, and it will be updated constantly.” Materials for Georgia’s Pre-K Program and Child Care Services (CCS) Core Licensing Rules are included on the site.

Commissioner Cagle said DECAL created OLLI in partnership with Georgia State University through a grant from the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009.

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“OLLI makes professional development more accessible by increasing the number of online courses designed specifically for early childhood educators,” explained Susan Adams, assistant commissioner for Georgia’s Pre-K Program. “We think it’s fitting in our 20th Anniversary Year to take our online professional development resources to the next level. I am confident that teachers, directors, consultants and parents will all benefit from this wise investment of federal stimulus funds.”

To access OLLI, simply go to www.oli.decal.ga.gov. All of the services available through OLLI are offered free of charge.

Georgia’s Pre-K Program was created in 1992 after voters approved the creation of the Georgia Lottery for Education to support college scholarships and a voluntary prekindergarten program. This year Georgia will invest over \$300 million to serve approximately 84,000 of the state’s youngest learners, more than 60% of all four year olds.

About Bright from the Start

Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning is responsible for meeting the child care and early education needs of Georgia’s children and their families. It administers the nationally recognized Georgia’s Pre-K Program, licenses child care centers and home-based child care, administers Georgia's Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) program, federal nutrition programs, and manages voluntary quality enhancement programs.

The department also houses the Head Start State Collaboration Office, distributes federal funding to enhance the quality and availability of child care, and works collaboratively with Georgia child care resource and referral agencies and organizations throughout the state to enhance early care and education. For more information, go to www.decal.ga.gov.